

Remarks

Claims 1, 20, 28, 32 and 54 have been amended to recite a unitary bolt having at least one integrally formed, radially upset portion spaced inwardly relative to a threaded portion thereof. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation such proposed amendment of such claims.

Claims 1-27 and 54 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Hardy, Jr. et al in view of Schwartz et al. In particular, it is submitted that it would be obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the link disclosed in Hardy, Jr. et al with a unitary bolt having a pair of integrally formed, radially upset portions as purportedly taught by Schwartz et al. Applicant respectfully submits that it would not be obvious to modify the Hardy, Jr. et al link as purportedly taught by Schwartz et al to arrive at the claimed structure in view of the following remarks.

Each of rejected claims 1-27 and 54 recites a unitary bolt having at least one threaded end portion and an integrally formed, radially upset portion spaced inwardly relative to the threaded end portion. Schwartz et al neither discloses nor teaches any such structure. Instead, it merely discloses and teaches forming either a spacer for a pair of inwardly disposed grommets or a spacer with a pair of inwardly disposed grommets, integrally with a bolt of a link assembly. It clearly does not disclose or teach a unitary bolt provided with at least one integrally formed, radially upset portion. The separate spacer 68 or composite consisting of spacer 68 and integrally formed inner grommets 80, 80 consists of a fiberglass enforced nylon or polyester material molded onto bolt 102. Although not to the same extent, the spacer arrangement of Schwartz et al suffers some of the disadvantages of the spacer arrangement of Hardy, Jr. et al in that although it is integrally formed on the bolt, it still requires an additional component and operation which involves the additional cost of the material of the spacer and the extra manufacturing step of molding the fiberglass reinforced nylon or polyester material on the bolt.

Even assuming it would be obvious to form a spacer integrally on the bolt of Hardy, Jr. et al as purportedly taught by Schwartz et al, the resulting structure still would not provide the claimed structure because in one of such proposed embodiments, the inner grommets would simply abut the integrally formed spacer and in another embodiment the inner grommets would be formed integrally with the spacer and would not snap fit onto such integrally formed spacer as in the claimed structure.

Applicant further submits that the proposed modification of the link assembly of Hardy, Jr. et al as purportedly taught by Schwartz et al would not be obvious because any such modification would result in a substantial reconstruction of the link assembly of Hardy, Jr. et al, resulting in a loss of its original identity.

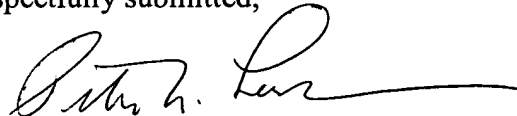
Clearly, forming the bolt of the claimed assembly with integral, radially upset portions is a substantial improvement over either of the link constructions disclosed by Hardy, Jr. et al or Schwartz et al. Forming a bolt with one or two upset portions obviously has to be an improvement over utilizing either a separate, spool type component or a molded on component as a spacer for a pair of inner grommets of a link assembly.

Each of claims 28-39 recites a grommet having a bore for receiving a bolt therethrough, the wall of such bore having an annular groove allowing the body of the grommet to be snap fit onto an upset portion of a bolt when mounted thereof, and a rigid washer insert molded in the body of the grommet disposed adjacent the groove and having an opening aligned with the bore in the grommet. It is submitted that Hardy, Jr. et al neither discloses nor teaches such structure. The grommet disclosed in Figure 3 of Hardy, Jr. et al simply discloses a grommet 140 having a bore for receiving a bolt therethrough and such bore having a groove for receiving a washer 128 therein. It is to be noted that such bore structure does not have a groove for snap fitting the grommet onto an upset portion of a bolt and a washer embedded in the grommet adjacent such groove.

In view of the foregoing, it respectfully is requested that the rejection of claims 1-39 and 54 be withdrawn, such claims be allowed and further that the application be passed to issue.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees or credit any overpayment of fees in connection with this communication to Deposit Account 19-4375.

Respectfully submitted,



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January 12, 2007  
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